

Dumont Dunes TRT  
MINUTES OF MEETING – DRAFT 1  
September 26, 2006

Bureau of Land Management  
Barstow Field Office  
Conference Room  
2601 Barstow Road  
Barstow, CA 92311  
(760) 252-6000

1. Call to Order

TRT Chairman Bill Presch called the meeting to order at 10:03 am and led the TRT in a recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

A. Introductions

Members of the TRT, participating BLM staff, and a member of the public introduced themselves:

TRT Members Present:

Dr. William Presch, chairman; California Desert District Advisory Council  
Jim Bramham, vice chairman; OHV organizations  
Randy Banis, secretary; other motorized recreation  
Terry Allen, Nevada OHV interests  
David Charlton, California Desert District Advisory Council  
Gerry Hillier, San Bernardino County  
Kathleen Stosuy, California OHV interests  
Ed Waldheim, California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission  
John Dalgleish, Friends of Dumont Dunes (via speakerphone)

BLM Staff Present:

Roxie Trost, Manager, Barstow Field Office  
Lynnette Elser, Recreation Chief, Barstow Field Office  
Dan Briot, Chief Ranger, Barstow Field Office  
Mike Ahrens, Off Highway Vehicle Coordinator, Barstow Field Office  
Mike Trost, Maintenance Worker, Barstow Field Office

Members of the Public Present:

Jerry Canning

TRT Members Absent:

Sheri Davis, commercial filming, California Desert District Advisory Council  
Ron Schiller, California Desert District Advisory Council

## B. Agenda

Bill Presch opened the agenda to additions or changes. Roxie Trost requested the addition of a presentation on the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, which provides the authority for the collection of user fees at Dumont Dunes. Randy Banis suggested this at the July meeting. The agenda was approved by consent.

## C. Minutes

Randy Banis circulated copies of draft minutes for the TRT's July 18, 2006 meeting. Ed Waldheim moved the approval of the minutes, and Kathy Stosuy seconded the motion. The minutes were approved without objection.

Roxie Trost informed the TRT that secretary Randy Banis had recently provided her with minutes and a TRT web page mockup to be posted for the public on the BLM Barstow web site. Given the technical nature of this task, Roxie asked Randy to consult with the office's systems manager.

## 2. Old Business

### A. Dunes Etiquette Campaign Update

Terry Allen presented a draft tri-fold brochure created by the Friends of Dumont Dunes. Randy Banis complemented the brochure's design and content. Jim Bramham suggested the addition of logos from the BLM and San Bernardino County Sheriff Department. Roxie Trost and Mike Ahrens discussed the review process for BLM approval that would take place at the State office.

Terry Allen reported that the group intends to print 5,000 copies. Roxie Trost suggested printing a small batch right away for the start of the season. Dan Briot offered corrections to a CFR citation in the brochure and clarified the wording about supplemental regulations. Kathy Stosuy suggested adding a reminder about avoiding the use of rebar stakes to mark campsites. Terry Allen concurred but reminded the TRT that unfortunately there isn't enough room on the brochure for all of the rules and regulations.

Jim Bramham recommended clarifying the rules regarding dumping of grey water, and suggested a discussion for a supplemental rule covering this practice. Mike Ahrens inquired about wording in the introduction, and clarified that the riding area at Dumont Dunes has actually increased in recent years, and has not decreased as described in the draft brochure. As an alternative, Gerry Hillier offered language that "users" have suffered a loss of riding areas in general.

Jim Bramham also suggested adding a message about respecting the flora and fauna. He also suggested that the section about the Friends of Dumont Dunes annual cleanup be replaced with other information. Ed Waldheim questioned removing the cleanup language, further asking that a message be added to encourage users to "Pack it in, pack it out." Jim explained concerns about the possibility of the wrong message being sent by an annual cleanup. This infers that users don't care about maintaining a clean area on a day-to-day basis, and that an organized annual cleanup effort is necessary.

### 3. New Business

#### A. Presentation on the Federal Lands Recreation Act

Lynnette Elser presented and reviewed two documents describing the act that gives the BLM and other federal lands management agencies the authority to collect user fees under certain conditions. The first was a printed PowerPoint presentation that highlighted key provisions of the act, and the second was a copy of the act itself. Lynnette emphasized that fees at Dumont Dunes are collected under the Special Recreation Fee provision.

#### B. Update on H.R. 5149

Ed Waldheim recounted his meeting with Scott Wilks of Congressman McKeon's Santa Clarita office, which also included Randy Banis, and representatives of various motorized access groups and the Congressman's Washington office via speakerphone. Ed summarized the access community's concerns: a) that the bill does not specify the motorized access that is claimed by the bill's proponents; b) that the continued existence of the Sperry Wash OHV corridor is ensured, and; c) that the proposed Wild & Scenic River designation might affect the Amargosa River crossing at Dumont Dunes Road and impact recreational access in the future.

Gerry Hillier described his meeting with Congressman McKeon's Washington staff in an attempt to gain language recognizing motorized recreation. Gerry offered that it was the opinion of most that the waning session of Congress would not bode well for the bill's passage.

Ed described efforts by other access groups to gain changes through the Resources Committee and Chairman Pombo. Ed described an expensive ongoing mail campaign being conducted by the California Wild Heritage Campaign targeting constituents of the 25<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

Terry Allen suggested moving the crossing improvement forward before the bill is eventually passed by a potential Democratic majority in Congress. Ed commented that he believes that the Wild & Scenic designation will cause an additional layer of compliance for such a project. Gerry questioned why the third river segment was even included in the bill, and that the cleanest approach might be to seek its deletion.

Ed expressed concerns that the BLM's State External Affairs officer was not working strongly enough to express the TRT's concerns. Gerry warned about leaving future decisions about the crossing to future interpretation should Wild & Scenic designation be granted. Mike Ahrens cautioned that the Recreational Status of a Wild & Scenic river designation recognizes and protects the "outstanding recreational values", and that by removing that segment from designation, such recognition and protection might be lost. Gerry retorted that although this was a valid interpretation, Congressional intent trumps staff opinion and we should still be cautious about the designation.

C. Holiday Staffing Plan

Mike Ahrens presented a draft of the Barstow Field Office Holiday Staffing Plan for FY 2007, and the Operations Plan for the Dumont Dunes Halloween/Nevada Day Weekend 2006.

Terry Allen discussed problems with spontaneous drag races and hopes that the BLM can discourage the activity from becoming organized.

D. Discussion of Fee Levels

Roxie Trost summarized the TRT's discussions from previous meetings regarding the current level of fees and the need to increase them. She recounted the group's previous recommendation that they not be increased for the 2006-07 season, and that the TRT desired an update on the Dumont Dunes operational budget in order to better determine the need for an increase in the future.

Mike Ahrens explained how some funding is year-to-year and uncertain, such as California's OHV grants and changes in Federal appropriations. This makes budgeting too far into the future problematic.

Ed Waldheim circulated copies of a Dumont Dunes budget from a prior period compiled for the purpose of an earlier OHV grant application. Ed requested the TRT's support to work with Roxie and the staff to update the Dumont Dunes budget. Ed also discussed the changing role of California's OHV grant program and resulting effects on OHV programs.

Gerry Hillier reminded the TRT that in addition to covering normal operating cost, enough should also be put away toward future enhancements or emergencies.

Terry Allen expressed concern that increased fees must result in additional enhancements. He believes that users feel that there have been too few enhancements to date, and won't appreciate that current funding is still not enough to cover normal operations.

Roxie explained the effects of last year's recreation budget cut of 50%. She also confirmed that funds in the Dumont Dunes account could indeed be carried over to future years. She further suggested that if there is a project that the TRT would like to see funded, they should suggest it at the meetings.

Terry Allen pondered the difficulty of proposing projects, as he understood that there wasn't any money available. He reiterated that if there is a fee increase, there should be a corresponding improvement in facilities or services. Jim Bramham relayed his experience at Glamis where improvements were promised but not delivered. He believed that such promises have not been made at Dumont Dunes.

Roxie and Lynnette Elser distributed and reviewed an updated activity ledger showing a current surplus in the account. Mike Trost estimated \$35,000 for the project and discussed the possibility of starting immediately in order to finish before Halloween.

Ed Waldheim moved that the TRT recommend that the BLM add a second lane to the Amargosa River crossing as soon as possible.

Mike Ahrens urged consideration for adding a third lane at this time, as well. Bill Presch supported the suggestion. Mike stated that the road would need to be expanded to three lanes in order to realize the true benefit of the improvement. The crossing could be done immediately, while improving the road to accommodate the new width of the crossing could be done later. Such improvements would involve moving the existing post and cable fence. Mike Trost revised his estimate to \$50,000 to add two lanes to the crossing.

Ed Waldheim amended his earlier motion to add two additional lanes with a cap of \$75,000. The motion was seconded by Terry Allen. The motion was passed unanimously with Randy Banis abstaining.

Ed suggested for a possible future project building a pumping station to fill water trucks.

Bill Presch commended the group for recommending the crossing expenditures. He reminded the TRT that in addition, Dumont Dunes may have a helipad and an operations center in 2008. Bill stated that the TRT would review fees at the next meeting.

Randy Banis cautioned that he would need better numbers in order to make an informed decision about fees. He stated that this lack of information was also the reason for abstaining on the crossing improvement vote.

#### 4. Members Items

A. Terry Allen inquired about receiving the TRT pass as discussed at the first meeting. Mike Ahrens stated he would distribute the TRT passes at the end of the meeting.

B. Bill Presch inquired if there was an update on the proposed operations center, but Roxie Trost had no further information.

C. Gerry Hillier asked if Roxie had any information as to why the environmental groups are suing on WEMO & NECO, but not NEMO. He stated that this a favorable development for Dumont Dunes. Roxie stated that she had no specific information on the suits.

D. Kathy Stusey asked if the Dumont Dunes contractor reports a break down of permit purchase by credit card vs. cash, or annual vs. weekly passes. This information would be helpful in setting fees at appropriate levels.

5. Next Meeting

By consent, the TRT set the following date, time and location for its next public meeting:  
Tuesday, November 28, 2006, 10:00 AM  
BLM Barstow Field Office Conference Room

6 Adjournment

By consent, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Randy Banis  
Secretary, Dumont Dunes Technical Review Team

DRAFT 1 -- October 24, 2006

## SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

### TRT Web Page

Randy Banis and the Barstow Office's systems manager will work together to establish a TRT web page for the public.

### User Fee Increase

Ed Waldheim will work with Roxie Trost and staff to revise the Dumont Dunes budget to assist with TRT discussions regarding fee levels.

Bill Presch will place this on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

### Amargosa River Crossing Improvement

Ed Waldheim moved to add two additional lanes to the Amargosa River crossing with a cap of \$75,000. The motion was seconded by Terry Allen. The motion was passed unanimously with Randy Banis abstaining.

### Next Meeting

By consent, the TRT set the following date, time and location for its next public meeting: Tuesday, November 28, 2006, 10:00 AM, BLM Barstow Field Office Conference Room